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EXTRACT

FROM A

REPRESENTATION

OF THE

INJUSTICE

AND

DANGEROUS TENDENCY

OF TOLERATING

SLAVERY,

OR

Admitting the least CLAIM of private Property in the Persons of Men in *England*.

By GRANVILLE SHARP.

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M DCC LXXI.

C O N T E N T S.

The occasion of this Treatise. All Persons during their residence in Great-Britain are subjects; and as such, bound to the laws and under the King's protection. By the English laws, no man, of what condition soever, to be imprisoned, or any way deprived of his LIBERTY without a legal process. The danger of Slavery taking place in England. Prevails in the Northern Colonies, notwithstanding the people's plea in favour of Liberty. Advertisements in the New-York Journal for the sale of SLAVES. Advertisements to the same purpose in the public prints in England. The danger of confining any person without a legal warrant. Instances of that nature. Note. Extract of several American laws. Reflections thereon.

EXTRACT, &c.

SOME persons respectable in the law, having given it as their opinion, “*That a slave, by coming from the West-Indies to Great-Britain or Ireland, either with or without his master, doth not become free, or that his master’s property or right in him is not thereby determined or varied;—and that the master may legally compel him to return again to the plantations.*”——This causes our Author to remark, that these Lawyers, by thus stating the case, merely on one side of the question, (I mean in favour of the master) have occasioned an unjust presumption and prejudice, (plainly inconsistent with the laws of the realm) and against the other side of the question; as they have not signified that their opinion was only conditional and not absolute, and must be understood on the part of the master, “*that he can produce an authentic agreement or contract in writing, by which it shall appear, that the said slave hath voluntary bound himself without compulsion or illegal duress.*”

Page 5. Indeed there are many instances of persons being freed from slavery by the laws
of

of England, but (God be thanked) there is neither law nor even a precedent, (at least I have not been able to find one) of a legal determination to justify a master in claiming or detaining any person whatsoever as a slave in England, who has not voluntarily bound himself as such by a contract in writing.

Page 20. An English subject cannot be made a slave without his own free consent, but ——— a foreign slave is made a subject with or without his own consent; there needs no contract for this purpose as in the other case; nor any other act or deed whatsoever, but that of his being landed in England; for according to a statute of 32d Henry, VIII. c. 16. Sect. 9. *“ Every alien or stranger, born out of the King’s obedience, not being denizen, which now or hereafter shall come into this realm, or elsewhere within the King’s dominions, shall, after the said first of September next coming, be bounden by and unto the laws and statutes of this realm, and to all and singular the contents of the same.”*

Now it must be observed, that though this law makes no distinction of bond or free, neither of colours or complexions, whether of black, brown, or white, for *“ every alien or stranger (without exception) are bounden by and unto the law, &c.”*

This binding or obligation, is properly
expressed

expressed by the English word Ligeance, (*a Ligando*) which may be either perpetual or temporary. Wood 6. 1. c. 3. p. 37. but one of these is indispensably due to the Sovereign from all ranks and conditions of people, their being bounden unto the laws, (upon which the Sovereign's right is founded) expresses and implies this subjection to the laws, and therefore to alledge, that an alien is not a subject, because he is in bondage, is not only a plea without foundation, but a contradiction in terms, for every person who in any respect is in subjection to the laws, must undoubtedly be a subject.

I come now to the main point——“*that every man, woman, or child, that now is, or hereafter shall be an inhabitant or resident of this kingdom of England, dominion of Wales, or town of Berwick upon Tweed,*” is, in some respect or other, the *King's subject*, and as such, is absolutely secure in his, or her *personal liberty*, by virtue of a statute, 31st Car. II. ch. 11, and particularly by the 12th Sect. of the same (wherein subjects of all conditions are plainly included.)

This act is expressly intended for the better securing the liberty of the subject, and for prevention of imprisonment beyond the seas. It contains no distinction of “*natural born, naturalized, denizen, or alien subject, nor of white or black, freemen or even of bond men,*”
(except

(except in the case already mentioned of a contract in writing, by which it shall appear, that the said slave have voluntarily bound himself without compulsion or illegal duress) allowed by the 13th Sect. and the exception likewise in the 14th Sect. concerning felons, but they are all included under the general titles of "*the subject, any of the said subjects,*" every such person, &c. Now the definition of the word "*person*" in its relative or civil capacity (according to Wood. b. 1. c. 11. p. 27) is either the King or a subject. These are the only capital distinctions that can be made; though the latter consists of a variety of denominations and degrees.

But if I were even to allow, that a *Negro slave* is not a subject, (though I think I have clearly proved that he is) yet it is plain, that such an one ought not to be denied the benefit of the King's court, unless the slaveholder shall be able to prove likewise, that he is not a *Man*, because every man may be free to sue for and defend his right in our courts, says a stat. 20th Edw. III. Ch. 4. and elsewhere according to law. And no man of what estate or condition that he be, (here can be no exception whatsoever) shall be put out of land or tenement, nor taken nor imprisoned, nor disinherited, nor put to death, without being brought in answer by due process of the law. 28th Edw. III. Ch. 3. No man therefore, of what

what estate or condition that he be, can lawfully be detained in England as a slave, because we have no law, whereby a man may be condemned to slavery, without his own consent, (for even convicted felons must, “ in open court pray to be transported,”) see Habeas Corpus act, Sect. 14. and therefore there cannot be any “ *due process of the law*,” tending to so base a purpose: It follows, therefore, that every man who presumes to detain any person whatsoever as a slave, otherwise than by virtue of a written contract, acts manifestly without “ *due process of the law*,” and consequently is liable to the slaves “ *action of false imprisonment*,” because “ *every man may be free to sue, &c.* so that the slave-holder cannot avail himself of his imaginary property, either by the assistance of the common law, or of a court of equity, (except it appears that the said slave has voluntary bound himself without compulsion, or illegal duress) for in both, his suit will certainly appear both unjust and indefensible. The former cannot assist him, because the statute law at present is so far from supposing any man in a state of slavery, that it cannot even permit such a state, except in the two cases mentioned in the 13th and 14th Section of the Habeas Corpus act; and the courts of equity likewise must necessarily decide against him, because his mere mercenary

nary plea, of *private property*, cannot, equitably in a case between (*man and man*), stand in competition with that *superior property* which every man must necessarily be allowed to have in his own *proper person*.

How then is the slave-holder to secure what he esteems his *property*? Perhaps he will endeavour clandestinely to seize the supposed slave in order to transport him, (with or without *his consent*) to the colonies, where such property it allowed: But let him take care what he does, the very attempt is punishable, and even the making over his property to another for that purpose, renders him equally liable to the severe penalties of the law, for a bill of sale may certainly be included under the terms expressed in the Habeas Corpus act, 12th Sect. viz. "*Any warrant or writing for such commitment, detainer, imprisonment or transportation, &c.*" It is also dangerous for a counsellor or any other person *to advise*" (see the act "*shall be advising*") such proceedings by saying, "*that a master may legally compel him, (the slave) to return again to the plantations.*" Likewise an Attorney, Notary-public, or any other person, who shall presume to draw up, negotiate, or even to witness a bill of sale, or other instrument, for such committment, &c. offends equally against the law, because, "*All, or any person or persons that shall frame, contrive, write,*
seal"

seal or countersign any warrant, or writing for such commitment, detainer, imprisonment or transportation, or shall be advising, aiding or assisting in the same, or any of them," are liable to all the penalties of the act. "*And the Plaintiff, in every such action, shall have judgment to recover his treble costs, besides damages ; which damages so to be given, shall not be less than five hundred pounds ;*" so that the injured may have ample satisfaction for their sufferings ; and even a judge may not direct or instruct a jury contrary to this statute whatever his private opinion may be concerning property in slaves ; because, *no order or command, nor no injunction,* is allowed to interfere with this *golden act of liberty.*

— I have before observed, that the general term, "*every Alien,*" includes *all strangers whatsoever,* and renders them *subject* to the King and the laws during their residence in this kingdom ; and this is certainly true, whether the aliens be Turks, Moors, Arabians, Tartars, or even savages from any part of the world.—Men are rendered obnoxious to the laws by their offences, and not by the particular denomination of their rank, order, parentage, colour or country, and therefore, though we should suppose, that any particular body of people whatsoever were not known, or had in consideration by the legislature at the different times

when the severe penal laws were made, yet no man can reasonably conceive, that such men are exempted on this account from the penalties of the said laws, when legally convicted of having offended against them.

Laws calculated for the moral purpose of preventing oppression, are likewise usually supposed to be everlasting, and to make up a part of our happy constitution ; for which reason, though the kind of oppression to be guarded against, and the penalties for offenders are minutely described therein, yet the persons to be protected are comprehended in terms as general as possible ; that “ *no person who now is, or hereafter shall be an inhabitant or resident in this kingdom,* (see Habeas Corpus act, Sect. 12th) may seem to be excluded from protection. The general terms of the several statutes before cited are so full and clear, that they admit of no exception whatsoever, for all persons, (Negroes as well as others) must be included in the terms ; “ *the subject ;—no subject of this realm that now is, or hereafter shall be an inhabitant, &c. any subject ; every such person,* see Habeas Cor. act. Also, *every man may be free to sue, &c. 20th Edward III. Cap. 4, and no man, of what estate or condition than he be, shall be taken nor imprisoned. &c.* True justice makes no respect of persons, and can never deny to any one that blessing to
which

which all mankind have an undoubted right, their *natural liberty*: Though the law makes no mention of Negroe slaves, yet this is no just argument for excluding them from the general protection of our happy constitution.

Neither can the objection, that Negroe slaves were not “ had in consideration or contemplation” when these laws were made, prove any thing against them; but, on the contrary, much in their favour; for both these circumstances are strong presumptive proofs, that the practice of importing slaves into this kingdom, and retaining them as such, is an innovation entirely foreign to the spirit and intention of the laws now in force.

— Page 79. A toleration of slavery, is, in effect, a toleration of inhumanity; for there are wretches in the world, who make no scruple to gain, by wearing out their slaves with continual labour, and a scanty allowance, before they have lived out half their natural days. 'Tis notorious, that this is too often the case in the unhappy countries where slavery is tolerated.

See the account of the European settlements in America, Part VI. Chap. 11. concerning the “ *misery of the Negroes, great waste of them, &c.*” which informs us, not only of a most scandalous profanation of the

Lord's day, but also, of another abomination, which must be infinitely more heinous in the sight of God, *viz.* oppression carried to such excess, as to be even destructive of the human species.

At present the inhumanity of constrained labour in excess, extends no farther in England, than to our beasts, as post and hackney horses, sand asses, &c.

But thanks to our laws, and not to the general good disposition of masters, that it is so, for the wretch, who is bad enough to mal-treat a helpless beast, would not spare his fellow man, if he had him as much in his power.

The maintenance of civil liberty, is therefore, absolutely necessary to prevent an increase of our national guilt, by the addition of the horrid crime of tyranny.—Notwithstanding that the plea of necessity cannot here be urged, yet this is no reason why an increase of the practice is not to be feared.

Our North America colonies afford us a melancholy instance to the contrary;—for though the climate in general is so wholesome and temperate, that it will not authorise this plea of necessity for the employment of slaves, any more than our own, yet the pernicious practice of slave-holding is become almost general in those parts. At New-York, for instance, the infringement on civil

vil or domestic liberty is become notorious, notwithstanding the political controversies of the inhabitants in praise of liberty; but no panegyrick on this subject (howsoever elegant in itself) can be graceful, or edifying from the mouth, or pen of one of those provincials; because men, who do not scruple to detain others in slavery, have but a very partial and unjust claim to the protection of the laws of liberty; and indeed it too plainly appears, that they have no real regard for liberty, farther than their own private interests are concerned; and (consequently) that they have so little detestation for despotism and tyranny, that they do not scruple to exercise them whenever their caprice excites them, or their private interest seems to require an exertion of their power over their miserable slaves.

Every petty planter, who avails himself of the service of slaves, is an arbitrary monarch, or rather a lawless Bashaw in his own territories, notwithstanding that the imaginary freedom of the province wherein he resides, may seem to forbid the observation.

The boasted liberty of our American colonies, therefore, has so little right to that sacred name, that it seems to differ from the arbitrary power of despotic monarchs, only in one circumstance, *viz.* that it is a *many-headed monster of tyranny*, which entirely sub-

verts our most excellent constitution, because liberty and slavery are so opposite to each other, that they cannot subsist in the same community. “ *Political liberty (in mild or well regulated governments) makes civil liberty valuable; and whosoever is deprived of the latter, is deprived also of the former.*” This observation of the learned Montesquieu, I hope, sufficiently justifies my censure of the Americans for their notorious violation of civil liberty.—The New-York Journal, or, The General Advertiser, for Thursday, 22d October 1767, Gives Notice by Advertisement of no less than eight different persons who have escaped from slavery, or are put up to public sale for that horrid purpose.

That I may demonstrate the indecency of such proceedings in a free country, I shall take the liberty of laying some of these Advertisements before my readers, by way of example.

“ *To be SOLD for Want of Employment,*
 “ A likely strong active Negroe Man, of
 “ about 24 years of age, this country born,
 “ (N.B. A natural born subject) understands
 “ most of a Baker’s trade and a good deal
 “ of farming business, and can do all sorts
 “ of house-work:—Also, A healthy Negroe
 “ Wench, of about 21 years old, is a tolerable Cook, and capable of doing all sorts
 “ of

“ of house-work, can be well recommend-
 “ ed for her honesty and sobriety : She has
 “ a female child of nigh three years old,
 “ which will be sold with the Wench if re-
 “ quired, &c.” Here is not the least consid-
 eration or scruple of conscience for the in-
 humanity of parting the mother and young
 child. From the stile, one would suppose the
 Advertisement to be of no more importance
 than if it related merely to the sale of a cow
 and her calf, and that the cow should be sold
 with or without her calf according as the
 purchaser should require.—But not only
 Negroes, but even American Indians are de-
 tained in the same abominable slavery in our
 colonies, though there cannot be any rea-
 sonable pretence whatsoever, for holding
 one of these as private property ; for even,
 if a written contract should be produced as
 a voucher in such a case, there would still
 remain great suspicion, that some undue ad-
 vantage had been taken of the Indians igno-
 rance concerning the nature of such a bond.

“ *Run away, on Monday the 21st instant,*
 “ *from J—n T——s, Esq; of West-Chester*
 “ *County, in the province of New-York,*
 “ An Indian slave, named Abraham, he
 “ may have changed his name, about 23
 “ years of age, about five feet five inches.”

Upon the whole, I think, I may, with
 justice conclude, that those Advertisements
 discover

discover a shameless prostitution and infringement on the common and natural rights of mankind.—But hold! perhaps the Americans may be able, with too much justice, to retort this severe reflection, and may refer us to news-papers published even in the free city of London, which contain Advertisements, not less dishonourable than their own. See Advertisement in the Public Ledger of 31st December, 1761.

“ *For S A L E,*

“ *A healthy Negroe G I R L*, aged about fifteen years; speaks good English, works at her needle, washes well, does household work, and has had the small-pox. By J. W. &c.”

Another Advertisement, not long ago, offered a reward for stopping a female slave who had left her mistress in Hatton-garden. And in the Gazetteer of 18th April 1769, appeared a very extraordinary Advertisement, with the following title.

“ *Horses, Tim Wisky, and black Boy,*
 “ To be Sold, at the Bull and Gate Inn,
 “ Holborn, *A very good Tim Wisky*, little
 “ the worse for wear, &c.” afterwards “ a
 “ *Chestnut Gelding.*”—Then, *A very good grey*
 “ *Mare*”—and last of all, (as if of the least
 consequence) “ *A well made good tempered Black*
 “ *Boy*, he has lately had the small-pox, and
 “ will be sold to any gentleman. Enquire
 “ as above.”

Another

Another Advertisement in the same paper, contains a very particular description of a Negroe man, called *Jeremiah* ———, “ and concludes as follows :—Whoever delivers him to Capt. M—— U——y, on board the *Elizabeth* at Prince’s stairs, Rotterdam, on or before the 31st instant, shall receive thirty Guineas Reward, or ten Guineas for such intelligence as shall enable the Captain or his Master, effectually to secure him. The utmost secrecy may be depended on.” It is not on account of shame, that men, who are capable of undertaking the desperate and wicked employment of kidnappers, are supposed to be tempted to such a business, by a promise, “ *of the utmost secrecy.*” But this must be from a sense of the unlawfulness of the act proposed to them, that they may have less reason to fear a prosecution. And as such a kind of people are supposed to undertake any thing for money, the Reward of thirty Guineas was tendered at the top of the Advertisement in capital letters. No man can be safe, be he white or black, if temptations to break the laws are so shamefully published in our news-papers.

A Creole Black Boy, is also offered to sale in the *Daily Advertiser* of the same date.

Besides these instances, the Americans may perhaps taunt us with the shameful treatment

treatment of a poor Negroe servant, who not long ago was put up to sale by public auction, together with the effects of his bankrupt master.——Also, that the prisons of this free city have been frequently prostituted of late by the tyrannical and dangerous practice of confining Negroes, under the pretence of slavery, though there has been no warrants whatsoever for their commitment.

This circumstance of confining a man without a warrant, has so great a resemblance to the proceedings of a Popish inquisition, that it is but too obvious what dangerous practices such scandalous innovations (if permitted to grow more into use) are liable to introduce. No person can be safe, if wicked and designing men have it in their power, under the pretence of private property as a slave, to throw a man clandestinely without a warrant into goal, and to conceal him there, until they can conveniently dispose of him.

A free man may be thus robbed of his liberty, and carried beyond the seas, without having the least opportunity of making his case known; which should teach us how jealous we ought to be of all imprisonments made without the authority, or previous examination of a civil magistrate.

The distinction of colour will, in a short time,

time, be no protection against such outrages, especially, as not only Negroes, but Mullatoes, and even American Indians, (which appears by one of the Advertisements before quoted) are retained in slavery in our American colonies; for there are many honest weather-beaten Englishmen, who have as little reason to boast of their complexion as the Indians. And indeed the more northern Indians, have no difference from us in complexion, but such as is occasioned by the climate or different way of living. The plea of private property, therefore, cannot by any means justify a private commitment of any person whatsoever to to prison, because of the apparent danger and tendency of such an innovation. This dangerous practice of concealing in prison, was attempted in the case of Jonathan Strong; for the door-keeper of the P--lt--y C—pt—r (or some person who acted for him) absolutely refused for two days to permit this poor injured Negro to be seen or spoke with, though a person went on purpose both those days to demand the same. —All laws ought to be founded upon the principle of “*doing as one would be done by,*” and indeed this principle seems to be the very basis of the English constitution, for what precaution could possibly be more effectual for that purpose, than the right we enjoy

enjoy of being judged by our Peers, creditable persons of the vicinage; especially, as we may likewise claim the right of excepting against any particular jurymen, who might be suspected of partiality.

This law breathes the pure spirit of liberty, equity and social love; being calculated to maintain that consideration and mutual regard, which one person ought to have for another howsoever unequal in rank or station.

But when any part of the community, under the pretence of private property, is deprived of this common privilege, 'tis a violation of civil liberty, which is entirely inconsistent with the social principles of a free state.

True liberty protects the labourer, as well as his Lord; preserves the dignity of human nature, and seldom fails to render a province rich and populous; whereas, on the other hand, a toleration of slavery is the highest breach of social virtue, and not only tends to depopulation, but too often renders the minds of both masters and slaves utterly depraved and inhuman, by the hateful extremes of exaltation and depression.

If such a toleration should ever be generally admitted in England, (which God forbid) we shall no longer deserve to be esteemed a civilized people; because, when the custom

customs of uncivilized nations, and the *uncivilized customs which disgrace our own colonies*, are become so familiar, as to be permitted amongst us with impunity, we ourselves must insensibly degenerate to the same degree of baseness with those from whom such bad customs were derived, and may too soon have the mortification to see the *hateful extremes of tyranny and slavery fostered under every roof.*"

Then must the happy medium of a well regulated liberty be necessarily compelled to find shelter in some more civilized country, where social virtue, and that divine precept, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,*" are better understood.

An attempt to prove the dangerous tendency, injustice and disgrace of tolerating slavery amongst Englishmen, would in any former age have been esteemed as superfluous and ridiculous, as if a man should undertake in a formal manner to prove, that darkness is not light.

Sorry am I, that the depravity of the present age has made a demonstration of this kind necessary.

Now that I may sum up the amount of what has been said in a single sentence, I shall beg leave to conclude in the words of the great sir Edward Coke, which though

spoken on a different occasion, are yet applicable to this, see Rushworth's Hist. Col. An. 1628. 4. Caroli. fol. 540.

“ It would be no honour to a king or
 “ kingdom, to be a king of bondmen or
 “ slaves, the end of this would be both *de-*
 “ *decus* † and *damnum* ‡ both to king and
 “ kingdom, that in former times have been
 “ so renowned.”

Note, at page 63. According to the laws of Jamaica printed at London in 1756. “ If
 “ any slave having been one whole year in
 “ this island, (says an act, N^o 64, clause 5.
 “ p. 114) shall run away, and continue absent from his owners service for the space
 “ of thirty days, upon complaint and proof
 “ &c. before any two justices of the peace,
 “ and three freeholders, &c. it shall and
 “ may be lawful for such justices and freeholders to order such slave to be punished
 “ by cutting off one of the feet of such slave, or
 “ inflict such other corporal punishment as
 “ they shall think fit.” Now that I may inform my readers what corporal punishments are sometimes thought fit to be inflicted, I will refer to the testimony of sir Hans Sloan, (see voyage to the islands of Madeira, Barbadoes, &c. and Jamaica, with the natural history of the last of these islands, &c. London 1707.

1707. Introduction, p. 56, and 57.) “ The
 “ punishment for crimes of slaves (says he)
 “ are usually for *rebellions* burning them, by
 “ nailing them down on the ground with
 “ crooked sticks, on every limb, and then
 “ applying the fire by degrees from the feet
 “ and hands, burning them gradually up
 “ to the head; whereby *their pains are ex-*
 “ *travagant*; for crimes of a lesser nature
 “ *gelding*, or *chopping off half the foot* with
 “ an axe. These punishments are suffered
 “ by them with great constancy.—— For
 “ negligence, they are usually whipped by
 “ the overseers with lance-wood switches,
 “ till they be bloody, and several of the
 “ switches broken, being first tied up by
 “ their hands in the mill houses.—— Af-
 “ ter they are whipped till they are raw,
 “ some put on their skins pepper and salt,
 “ to make them smart; at other times their
 “ masters will drop melted wax on their
 “ skins, and use several *very exquisite torments*.”
 Sir Hans adds, “ These punishments are
 “ sometimes merited by the blacks, who are
 “ a very perverse generation of people, and
 “ though they appear very harsh, yet are
 “ scarce equal to some of their crimes, and
 “ inferior to what punishments other Euro-
 “ pean nations inflict on their slaves in the
 “ East-Indies, as may be seen by Moquet,
 “ and other travellers.” Thus sir Hans Sloan
 endeavours

endeavours to excuse those shocking cruelties, but certainly in vain: because no crimes whatsoever can merit such severe punishments, unless I except the crimes of those who devise and inflict them. Sir Hans Sloan indeed, mentions *rebellion*, as the principal crime, and certainly it is very justly esteemed a most heinous crime, in a land of liberty, where government is limited by equitable and just laws, if the same are tolerably well observed; but in countries where arbitrary power is exercised with such intolerable cruelty, as is before described, if resistance be a crime, it is certainly the most natural of all others.

But the 19th clause of the 38th act, would indeed on a slight perusal induce us to conceive, that the punishment for rebellion is not so severe as it is represented by Sir Hans Sloan; because a slave, though *deemed rebellious*, is thereby condemned to no greater punishment than transportation. Nevertheless if the clause be thoroughly considered we shall find no reason to commend the mercy of the legislature; for it only proves, that the Jamaica law-makers will not scruple to charge the slightest and most natural offences with the most opprobrious epithets; and that a poor slave who perhaps has no otherwise incurred his master's displeasure

displeasure than by endeavouring (upon the just and warrantable principles of self-preservation) to escape from his master's tyranny, without any criminal intention whatsoever, is liable to be *deemed rebellious*, and to be arraigned as a capital offender. "For every
 " slave, and slaves that shall run away and continue but for the space of twelve months, except such slave or slaves as shall not have been
 " three years in this island, shall be *deemed rebellious*," &c. (see act 38, clause 19. p. 60.) Thus we are enabled to define what a West Indian tyrant means by the word *rebellious*. But unjust as this clause may seem, yet it is abundantly more merciful and considerate than a subsequent act against the same poor miserable people, because the former assigns no other punishment for persons so *deemed rebellious* than that they, "*Shall be transported* by order of two justices and three freeholders," &c. whereas the latter spares not the blood of these poor injured fugitives: For by the 66th act, a reward of 50 pound is offered to those who, "shall kill or bring
 " in alive any *rebellious slaves*," that is, any of these unfortunate people whom the law has "*deemed rebellious*," as above; and this premium is not only tendered to commissioned parties (see 2d. clause) but even to any private "*hunter, slave or other person*," (see 3d. clause.)

Thus it is manifest, that the law treats these poor unhappy men with as little ceremony and consideration, as if they were merely wild beasts. But the innocent blood that is shed in consequence of such a detestable law, must certainly call for vengeance on the murderous abettors and actors of such deliberate wickedness: And though many of the guilty wretches should even be so hardened and abandoned as never afterwards to be capable of sincere remorse, yet a time will undoubtedly come, when they will shudder with dreadful apprehensions, on account of the insufficiency of so wretched an excuse, as that their poor murdered brethren were by law "*deemed rebellious.*" But bad as these laws are, yet, in justice to the freeholders of Jamaica, I must acknowledge, that their laws are not near so cruel and inhuman as the laws of Barbadoes and Virginia, and seem at present, to be much more reasonable than they have formerly been, many very oppressive laws being now expired, and others less severe enacted in their room.

But it is far otherwise in Barbadoes; for by the 329th act, p. 125. "If any Negro
 "or other slave, under punishment by his
 "master, or his order, for running away,
 "or any other crimes, or misdemeanors to—
 "wards

“wards his said master, unfortunately shall
 “suffer in life, or member, (which seldom
 “happens) (but it is plain by this law that
 “it does sometimes happen) *no person what-*
 “*ever shall be liable to any fine therefore, but if*
 “*any man shall, of wantonness, or only of bloo-*
 “*dy mindedness, or cruel intention, wilfully*
 “*kill a Negro or other slave of his own*”—Now
 the reader, to be sure, will naturally expect, that some very severe punishment must in this case be ordained; to deter, the *wanton, bloody minded, and cruel* wretch from *wilfully killing* his fellow creatures; but alas! the Barbadian law-makers have been so far from intending to curb such abandoned wickedness, that they have absolutely made this law on purpose to screen these enormous crimes from the just indignation of any righteous person, who might think himself bound in duty to prosecute a bloody minded villain; they have, therefore, presumptuously taken upon them to give a sanction, as it were, by law, to the horrid crime of wilful murder; and have accordingly ordained, that he who is guilty of it in Barbadoes, though the act should be attended with all the aggravating circumstances before-mentioned, “*shall pay into the publick treasury (no more than) fifteen pounds sterling;*” but if he shall kill another man’s, he shall pay to
 the

the owner of the Negro, double the value, and into the public treasury, *twenty five pounds sterling*, and he shall further, by the next justice of the peace, be bound to his good behaviour, during the pleasure of the governor and council, *and not be liable to any other punishment or forfeiture for the same.*

The most consummate wickedness, I suppose, that any body of people, under the specious form of a legislature were ever guilty of: This act contains several other clauses which are shocking to humanity, though too tedious to mention here..

According to an act of Virginia (4 Anne ch. 49. sec. 37. p. 227.) “ after proclamation
“ is issued against slaves that run away and lie
“ out, it is lawful for any person whatsoever,
“ *to kill and destroy such slaves by such
“ ways and means as he, she, or they shall think
“ fit*, without accusation or impeachment of
“ any crime for the same,” &c. And lest private interest should incline the planter to mercy, (to which we must suppose such people can have no other inducement) it is provided and enacted in the succeeding clause, (N^o 38.) “ That for *every slave killed*, in pur-
“ suance of this act, or *put to death by law*,
“ the master, or owner of such slave, *shall
“ be paid by the public.*”

Also

Also by an act of Virginia (9 Geo. I. ch. 4. sect. 18. p. 343) it is ordained, “ That, “ where any slave shall hereafter be found “ notoriously guilty of going abroad in the “ night, or running away, and lying out, “ and cannot be reclaimed from *such* disorderly courses by the common method of “ punishment, it shall and may be lawful, “ to and for the court of the county upon “ complaint and proof thereof to them made “ by the owner of such slave, to order and “ direct every such slave to be punished by “ *dismembering or any other way*, not touching life, as the said county court *shall think fit.*”

I have already given examples enough of the horrid cruelties which are sometimes *thought fit* on such occasions. But if the innocent and most natural act of “ *running away,*” from intolerable tyranny deserves such relentless severity, what kind of punishment have these law-makers themselves to expect hereafter, on account of their own enormous offences; alas! to look for mercy (without a timely repentance) will only be another instance of their gross injustice! “ *Having their consciences seared with a hot iron,*” they seem to have lost all apprehensions that their slaves are men, for they scruple not to number them with beasts. See an
act

act of Barbadoes, (N^o 333. p. 128.) intituled,
 “ An act for the better regulating of *outcries*,
 “ in open market,” here we read of “ *Ne-*
 “ *groes, cattle, coppers, and stills, and other*
 “ *chattels*, brought by execution to open
 “ market to be outcried,” and these (as if
 all of equal importance) are ranged together
 “ *in great lots or numbers to be sold.*”

—Page 70. In the 329 act of Barba-
 does (p. 122) it is asserted, that, “ brutish
 “ slaves deserve not, for the baseness of their
 “ condition, to be tried by a legal trial of
 “ *twelve men of their peers or neighbourhood*,
 “ which neither truly can be rightly done,
 “ as the subjects of England are;” (yet
 slaves also are subjects of England, whilst
 they remain within the British dominions,
 notwithstanding this insinuation to the con-
 trary) “ nor is execution to be delay’d to-
 “ wards them, in case of such horrid crimes
 “ committed,” &c.

A similar doctrine is taught in an act of
 Virginia, (9 Geo. I. ch. 4. sect. 3. p. 339.)
 wherein it is ordained, “ that every slave com-
 “ mitting such offence as by the laws ought
 “ to be punished by death or loss of member,
 “ shall be forthwith committed to the common
 “ goal of the county, &c. And the sheriff of
 “ such county, upon such commitment, shall
 “ forthwith certify the same, with the cause
 “ thereof,

“ thereof, to the governor or commander in
 “ chief, &c. who is thereupon desired and im-
 “ powered to issue a commission of oyer and
 “ terminer ; *To such persons as he shall think fit ;*
 “ which persons, forthwith after the receipt of
 “ such commission, are impowered and requir-
 “ ed to cause the offender to be publicly ar-
 “ raigned and tried, &c. without the solemn-
 “ ty of a jury, &c. Now let us consider the dan-
 gerous tendency of those laws. As English-
 men, we strenuously contend for this abso-
 lute and immutable necessity of trials by ju-
 ries : but is not the spirit and equity of
 this old English doctrine entirely lost, if we
 partially confine that justice to ourselves a-
 lone, when we have it in our power to ex-
 tend it to others ? The natural right of all
 mankind must principally justify our insist-
 ing upon this necessary privilege in favour
 of ourselves in particular, and therefore if
 we do not allow that the judgment of an
 impartial jury is indispensably necessary in
 all cases whatsoever, wherein the life of
 man is depending, we certainly undermine
 the equitable force and reason of those laws,
 by which *we ourselves are protected*, and con-
 sequently are unworthy to be esteemed, ei-
 ther Christians or Englishmen.

Whatever right the members of a pro-
 vincial assembly may have to enact *bye laws*,
 for

For particular exigences among themselves, yet in so doing, they are certainly bound in duty to their sovereign, to observe most strictly, the fundamental principles of that constitution, which his majesty is sworn to maintain; for wheresoever the bounds of the British empire are extended, there the common law of England must of course take place, and cannot be safely set aside by any *private law* whatsoever, because the introduction of an unnatural tyranny must necessarily endanger the king's dominions. The many alarming insurrections of slaves in the several colonies, are sufficient proofs of this. The common law of England ought therefore to be so established in every province, as to include the respective *bye laws* of each province; instead of being by them *excluded* which latter has been too much the case.

Every inhabitant of the British colonies, black as well as white, bond as well as free, are undoubtedly the *king's subjects*, during their residence within the limits of the king's dominions, and as such, are entitled to personal protection, however bound in service to their respective masters. Therefore, when any of these are put to death, "*without the solemnity of a jury,*" I fear that there is too much reason to attribute *the guilt of murder,* to every person concerned in ordering the
same.

same, or in consenting thereto; and all such persons are certainly responsible *to the king and his laws, for the loss of a subject*. The horrid iniquity, injustice, and dangerous tendency of the several plantation laws, which I have quoted, are so apparent, that it is unnecessary for me to apologize for the freedom with which I have treated them. If such laws are not absolutely necessary for the government of slaves, the law-makers must unavoidably allow themselves to be the most cruel and abandoned tyrants upon earth, or perhaps, that ever were on earth. On the other hand, if it be said, that it is impossible to govern slaves without such inhuman severity and detestable injustice, the same will certainly be an invincible argument against the least toleration of slavery amongst christians, because the temporal profit of the planter or master, however lucrative, cannot compensate the forfeiture of his everlasting welfare, or (at least I may be allowed to say) the apparent danger of such a forfeiture.

Oppression is a most grievous crime; and the cries of these much injured people (though they are only poor ignorant heathens) will certainly reach heaven! The scriptures (*which are the only true foundation of all laws*) denounce a tremendous judgment against the man who should offend e-

ven one little one; “ It were better for him
 “ (even the merciful Saviour of the world
 “ hath himself declared) that a millstone were
 “ hanged about his neck and he cast into
 “ the sea, than that he should offend one of
 “ these little ones.” Luke, xvii. 2. Who
 then shall attempt to vindicate those inhu-
 man establishments of government, under
 which, even our own countrymen so griev-
 ously *offend* and *oppress*, (not merely *one*, or
 a few little ones, but) an immense multi-
 tude of *men, women, children*, and the *chil-*
dren of their children, from generation to ge-
 neration? May it not be said with like
 justice, it were better for the English nation
 that these American dominions had never
 existed, or even that they should have been
 sunk into the sea, than that the kingdom of
 Great-Britain should be loaded with the
 horrid guilt of tolerating such abominable
 wickedness! In short, if *the king's prerogative*
 is not speedily exerted for the relief of his
 majesty's oppressed and much injured sub-
 jects in the British colonies (because to *relieve*
the subject from the oppression of petty ty-
 rants, is the principal use of the royal prero-
 gative, as well as the principal and most na-
 tural means of maintaining the same) and for
 the extension of the British constitution to
 the most distant colonies whether in the East
 or

or West Indies, it must inevitably be allowed, that great share of this enormous guilt will certainly rest on this side the water.

I hope this hint will be taken notice of by those whom it may concern; and that the freedom of it will be excused, as from a *loyal and disinterested* adviser.

Extracts from the writings of several noted Authors, on the Subject of the *Slavery of the Negroes*, viz. George Wallace, Francis Hutcheson, James Foster.

GEORGE WALLIS, in his *system of the principles of the laws of Scotland*, speaking of the slavery of the Negroes in our colonies, says “ We all know that they (the *Negroes*) are purchased from their Princes, who pretend to have a right to dispose of them, and that they are, like other commodities, transported by the merchants who have bought them, into *America*, in order to be exposed to sale. If this trade admits of a moral or a rational justification, every crime, even the most atrocious, may be justified. Government was instituted for the good of mankind; kings, princes, governors, are not proprietors of those who are subject to their authority; they have not a right to make them miserable. On the contrary, their authority is vested in them, that they may, by the just exercise of it, promote the happiness of their people. Of course, they have not a right to dispose of their liberty, and to sell them for slaves. Besides,

sides, no man has a right to acquire or to purchase them; men and their liberty are not (*in commercio*) they are not either saleable or purchasable. One, therefore, has nobody but himself to blame, in case he shall find himself deprived of a man, whom he thought he had, by buying for a price, made his own; for he dealt in a trade which was illicit, and was prohibited by the most obvious dictates of humanity. For these reasons every one of those unfortunate men who are pretended to be slaves, has a right to be declared to be free, for he never lost his liberty; he could not lose it; his prince had no power to dispose of him. Of course the sale was *ipso jure* void. This right he carries about with him, and is entitled every where to get it declared. As soon, therefore, as he comes into a country in which the judges are not forgetful of their own humanity, it is their duty to remember that he is a man, and to declare him to be free. I know it has been said, that questions concerning the state of persons ought to be determined by the law of the country to which they belong; and that, therefore, one who would be declared to be a slave in *America*, ought, in case he should happen to be imported into *Britain*, to be adjudged according to the law of *America* to be a slave; a doctrine than which nothing can be
more

more barbarous. Ought the judges of any country, out of respect to the law of another, to shew no respect to their kind, and to humanity; out of respect to a law, which is in no sort obligatory upon them, ought they to disregard the law of nature, which is obligatory on all men at all times, and in all places: Are any laws so binding as the eternal laws of justice? Is it doubtful, whether a judge ought to pay greater regard to them, than to those arbitrary and inhuman usages which prevail in a distant land? Aye, but our colonies would be ruined if slavery was abolished. Be it so; would it not from thence follow, that the bulk of mankind ought to be abused, that our pockets may be filled with money, or our mouths with delicacies? The purses of highwaymen would be empty in case robberies were totally abolished; but have men a right to acquire money by going out to the highway? Have men a right to acquire it by rendering their fellow creatures miserable? Is it lawful to abuse mankind, that the avarice, the vanity, or the passions of a few may be gratified? No! There is such a thing as justice, to which the most sacred regard is due. It ought to be inviolably observed. Have not these unhappy men a better right to their liberty, and to their happiness, than our *American* merchants have to the profits which they make by torturing their kind? Let
therefore

therefore our colonies be ruined, but let us not render so many men miserable. Would not any of us, who should-----be snatched by pirates from his native land, think himself cruelly abused, and at all times entitled to be free. Have not these unfortunate *Africans*, who meet with the same cruel fate, the same right? Are not they men as well as we, and have they not the same sensibility? Let us not, therefore, defend or support a usage which is contrary to all the laws of humanity.

But it is false, that either we or our colonies would be ruined by the abolition of slavery. It might occasion a stagnation of business for a short time. Every great alteration produces that effect; because mankind cannot, on a sudden, find ways of disposing of themselves and of their affairs: But it would produce many happy effects. It is the slavery which is permitted in *America* that has hindered it from becoming so soon populous as it would otherwise have done. Let the Negroes free, and in a few generations, this vast and fertile continent would be crowded with inhabitants; learning, arts, and every thing would flourish amongst them; instead of being inhabited by wild beasts, and by savages, it would be peopled by philosophers, and by men."

Francis

Francis Hutcheson professor of philosophy, at the university of Glasgow, in his *system of moral philosophy*, page 211, says, "He who detains another by force in slavery, is always bound to prove his title. The slave sold or carried into a distant country must not be obliged to prove a negative, that *he never forfeited his liberty*. The violent possessor must in all cases shew his title, especially where the old proprietor is well known. In this case each man is the original proprietor of his own liberty. The proof of his losing it must be incumbent on those who deprive him of it by force. The *Jewish* laws had great regard to justice, about the servitude of *Hebrews*, founding it only on consent or some crime or damage, allowing them always a proper redress upon any cruel treatment ; and fixing a limited time for it, unless upon trial the servant inclined to prolong it. The laws about foreign slaves had many merciful provisions against immoderate severity of the masters. But under christianity, whatever lenity was due from an *Hebrew* towards his country man must be due towards all ; since the distinctions of nations are removed, as to the point of humanity and mercy, as well as natural right, nay some of these rights, granted over foreign slaves may justly be deemed only such indulgences, as those of polygamy and divorce,

voice, granting only external impunity in such practice, and not sufficient vindication of them in conscience."

Page 85, It's pleaded that, "In some barbarous nations unless the captives were brought for slaves they would all be murdered. They therefore owe their lives, and all they can do, to their purchasers; and so do their children, who would not otherwise have come into life: But this whole plea is no more than that of the *negotium utile gestum*, to which any civilized nation is bound by humanity, 'tis a prudent expensive office done for the service of others without a gratuitous intention; and this founds no other right than that to full compensation of all charges and labour employed for the benefit of others.

A set of inaccurate popular phrases, blinds us in these matters, captives owe their lives, and all to the purchasers, say they. Just in the same manner, we, our nobles, and princes, often owe our lives to midwives, chirurgeons, physicians, &c. one who was the means of preserving a man's life is not therefore entitled to make him a slave, and sell him as a piece of goods. Strange that in any nation where a sense of liberty prevails, where the christian religion is professed, custom and high prospects of gain can so stupify the conscience of men, and

all sense of natural justice, that they can hear such computations made about the value of their fellow-men, and their liberty, without abhorrence and indignation.

James Foster, D. D. in his *discourses on natural religion and social virtue*, also shews his just indignation at this wicked practice, which he declares to be “*a criminal and outrageous violation of the natural right of mankind.*” At page 156, 2 vol. he says, “Should we have read concerning the Greeks or Romans of old, that they traded, with view to make slaves of their own species, whom they certainly knew that this would involve in schemes of blood and murder, of destroying, or enslaving each other, that they even fomented wars, and engaged whole nations and tribes in open hostilities, for their own private advantage; that they had no detestation of the violence and cruelty; but only feared the ill success of their inhuman enterprises; that they carried men like themselves, their brethren, and the off-spring of the same common parent, to be sold like beasts of prey, or beasts of burden, and put them to the same reproachful trial, of their soundness, strength and capacity for greater bodily service; that quite forgetting, and renouncing, the original dignity of human nature, communicated to all, they treated them with more severity and ruder discipline,

pline, than even the *ox* or the *ass*, who are *void* of *understanding*—should we not if this had been the case, have naturally been led to despise all their *pretended refinements of morality*; and to have concluded, that as they were not nations destitute of politeness, they must have been *entire strangers to virtue and benevolence*.

But, notwithstanding this, we ourselves (who profess to be christians, and boast of the peculiar advantage we enjoy, by means of an express revelation of our duty from heaven) are in effect, these very untaught and rude heathen countries. With all our superior light, we instil into those, whom we call savage and barbarous, the most despicable opinion of human nature. We, to the utmost of our power, weaken and dissolve the universal tie, that binds and unites mankind. We practice what we should exclaim against, as the utmost excess of cruelty and tyranny, if nations of the world, differing in colour, and form of government from ourselves, were so possessed of empire, as to be able to reduce us to a state of unmerited and brutish servitude. Of consequence we sacrifice our reason, our humanity, our christianity to an unnatural sordid gain. We teach other nations to despise and trample under foot, all the obligations of social virtue. We take the most effectual method
to

to prevent the propagation of the gospel, by representing it as a scheme of power and barbarous oppression, and an enemy to the natural privileges and rights of men.

Perhaps all, that I have now offered, may be of very little weight to restrain this enormity, this aggravated iniquity. However I still have the satisfaction, of having entered my private protest against a practice which, in my opinion, bids that God, who is the God and Father of the Gentiles, unconverted to christianity, most daring and bold defiance, and spurns at all the principles both of natural and revealed religion.

E X T R A C T

EXTRACT

From an ADDRESS

IN THE

VIRGINIA GAZETTE,

of MARCH 19, 1767.

Mr. RIND,

PERMIT me, in your paper, to address the members of our assembly, on two points, in which the public interest is very nearly concerned.

The abolition of slavery and the retrieval of specie in this colony, are the subjects on which I would bespeak their attention.—

Long and serious reflections upon the nature and consequences of slavery have convinced me, that it is a violation both of justice and religion; that it is dangerous to the safety of the community in which it prevails; that it is destructive to the growth of arts and sciences; and lastly, that it produces a numerous and very fatal train of vices, both in the slave, and in his master.

To prove these assertions, shall be the purpose of the following essay.

That slavery then is a violation of justice,
E will

will plainly appear, when we consider what justice is. It is truly and simply defined, as by *Justinian*, *constans et perpetua voluntas, ejus suum cuique tribuendi*; a constant endeavour to give every man his right.

Now, as freedom is unquestionably the birthright of all mankind, *Africans* as well as *Europeans*, to keep the former in a state of slavery, is a constant violation of that right, and therefore of justice.

The ground on which the civilians who favour slavery, admit it to be just; namely, consent, force and birth, is totally disputable. For surely a man's own will and consent, cannot be allowed to introduce so important an innovation into society as slavery, or to make himself an outlaw, which is really the state of a slave, since neither consenting to, nor aiding the laws of the society, in which he lives, he is neither bound to obey them, nor entitled to their protection.

To found any right in force, is to frustrate all right, and involve every thing in confusion, violence and rapine. With these two the last must fall, since if the parent cannot justly be made a slave, neither can the child be born in slavery. “ The law of nations, says baron *Montesquieu*, has doomed prisoners to slavery, to prevent their being slain; the *Roman* civil law, permitted debtors whom their creditors might treat
ill,

ill, to sell themselves. And the law of nature requires that children, whom their parents being slaves cannot maintain, should be slaves like them. These reasons of the civilians are not just, it is not true that a captive may be slain, unless in a case of absolute necessity; but if he hath been reduced to slavery, it is plain that no such necessity existed, since he was not slain. It is not true that a free man can sell himself, for sale supposes a price, but a slave and his property becomes immediately that of his master, the slave can therefore receive no price, nor the master pay, &c. And if a man cannot sell himself, nor a prisoner of war be reduced to slavery, much less can his child." Such are the sentiments of this illustrious civilian; his reasonings, which I have been obliged to contract, the reader interested in this subject, will do well to consult at large.

Yet even these rights of imposing slavery, questionable, nay refutable as they are, we have not to authorize the bondage of the *Africans*. For neither do they consent to be our slaves, nor do we purchase them of their conquerors. The *British* merchants obtain them from *Africa* by violence, artifice and treachery, with a few trinkets to prompt those unfortunate***people to enslave one another by force or stratagem. Purchase them

them indeed they may, under the authority of an act of the British parliament. An act entailing upon the *Africans*, with whom we are not at war, and over whom a British parliament could not of right assume even a shadow of authority, the dreadful curse of perpetual slavery, upon them and their children for ever. *There cannot be in nature, there is not in all history, an instance in which every right of men is more flagrantly violated.* The laws of the antients never authorized the making slaves, but of those nations whom they had conquered; yet they were heathens and we are christians. They were misled by a monstrous religion, divested of humanity, by a horrible and barbarous worship; we are directed by the unerring precepts of the revealed religion we possess, enlightened by its wisdom, and humanized by its benevolence; before them were gods deformed with passions, and horrible for every cruelty and vice; before us is that incomparable pattern of meekness, charity, love and justice to mankind, which so transcendently distinguished the founder of christianity and his ever amiable doctrines.

Reader, remember that the corner stone of your religion is to do unto others as you would they should do unto you; ask then your own heart whether it would not abhor any one, as the most outrageous violator

tor of that and every other principle of right, justice and humanity, who should make a slave of you and your posterity for ever. Remember that God knoweth the heart, lay not this flattering unction to your soul, that it is the custom of the country ; that you found it so : that not your will but your necessity consents. Ah ! think how little such an excuse will avail you in that awful day, when your Saviour shall pronounce judgment on you for breaking a law too plain to be misunderstood, too sacred to be violated. If we say we are christians, yet act more inhumanly and unjustly than heathens, with what dreadful justice must this sentence of our blessed Saviour fall upon us : “ Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my father which is in heaven.” (*Matthew* vii. 21.) Think a moment how much your temporal, your eternal welfare depends upon an abolition of a practice, which deforms the image of your God, tramples on his revealed will, infringes the most sacred rights, and violates humanity.

Enough I hope has been asserted to prove that slavery is a violation of justice and religion. That it is dangerous to the safety of the state in which it prevails, may be as safely asserted.

What

What one's own experience has not taught, that of others must decide. From hence does history derive its utility ; for being, when truly written, a faithful record of the transactions of mankind, and the consequences that flowed from them, we are thence furnished with the means of judging what will be the probable effect of transactions similar among ourselves.

We learn then from history, that slavery, wherever encouraged, has sooner or later been productive of very dangerous commotions. I will not trouble my reader here with quotations in support of this assertion, but content myself with referring those who may be dubious of its truth, to the histories of *Athens*, *Lacedemon*, *Rome*, and *Spain*.——

How long, how bloody and destructive was the contest between the Moorish slaves, and the native Spaniards ? and after almost deluges of blood had been shed the Spaniards obtained nothing more, than driving them into the mountains.——Less bloody indeed, tho' not less alarming have been the insurrections in *Jamaica* ; and to imagine that we shall be for ever exempted from this calamity, which experience teaches us to be inseparable from slavery, so encouraged, is an infatuation as astonishing as it will be surely fatal.——&c. &c.

EXTRACT

OF A

SERMON,

PREACHED BY THE

BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER,

Before the SOCIETY for the PROPAGATION
of the GOSPEL, at their anniversary
meeting, on the 21st of *February*, 1766.

FROM the free-savages I now come
(the last point I propose to consider) to
the savages in bonds. By these I mean the
vast multitudes yearly stolen from the oppo-
site continent, and sacrificed by the colo-
nists to their great idol, the GOD OF GAIN.
But what then, say these sincere worship-
pers of *Mammon*, they are our own property,
which we offer up. Gracious God! to talk
(as in herds of cattle) of property in rational
creatures! creatures endowed with all our
faculties, possessing all our qualities but that
of colour; our brethren both by nature and
grace,

grace, shocks all the feelings of humanity,
 and the dictates of common sense. But, a-
 las! what is there in the infinite abuses of
 society which does not shock them? Yet
 nothing is more certain in itself, and appa-
 rent to all, than that the infamous traffic
 for slaves directly infringes both divine and
 human law. Nature created man free;
 and grace invites him to assert his freedom.
 In excuse of this violation, it hath been
 pretended, that though indeed these mise-
 rable outcasts of humanity be torn from
 their homes and native country by fraud
 and violence, yet they thereby become the
 happier, and their condition the more eligi-
 ble. But who are You, who pretend to
 judge of another man's happiness? That
 state, which each man, under the guidance
 of his maker, forms for himself; and not
 one man for another. To know what con-
 stitutes mine or your happiness, is the sole
 prerogative of him who created us, and cast
 us in so various and different moulds. Did
 your slaves ever complain to you of their
 unhappiness amidst their native woods and
 deserts? Or, rather, let me ask, did they
 ever cease complaining of their condition
 under you their lordly masters? where they
 see, indeed, the accommodations of civil
 life, but see them all pass to others, them-
 selves, unbenefited by them. Be so graci-

ous then, ye petty tyrants over human freedom, to let your slaves judge for themselves, what it is which makes their own happiness. And then see whether they do not place it in the return to their own country, rather than in the contemplation of your grandeur, of which their misery makes so large a part. A return so passionately longed for, that despairing of happiness here, that is, of escaping the chains of their cruel task masters, they console themselves with feigning it to be the gracious reward of heaven in their future state; which I do not find their haughty masters have as yet concerned themselves to invade. The less hardy indeed wait for this felicity till overwearied nature sets them free; but the more resolved have recourse even to self-violence, to force a speedier passage.

But it will be still urged, that though what is called human happiness be of so fantastic a nature, that each man's imagination creates it for himself, yet human misery is more substantial and uniform throughout all the tribes of mankind. Now, from the worst of human miseries, the savage *Africans* by these forced emigrations, are intirely secured, such as the being perpetually hunted down like beasts of prey or profit, by their more savage and powerful neighbours—In truth,

truth, a blessed change!—from being hunted to being caught. But who are they that have set on foot this general HUNTING? Are they not these very civilized violators of humanity themselves? who tempt the weak appetites, and provoke the wild passions of the fiercer savages to prey upon the rest.”

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